

UD and DEMA Partner to Support Long-Term Recovery

The [University of Delaware](#) and the [Delaware Emergency Management Agency \(DEMA\)](#) have recently partnered on several new projects to aid the State of Delaware's long-term recovery efforts from COVID-19. DEMA has provided support to the Institute of Public Administration at the Biden School, Delaware Sea Grant, and the Disaster Research Center to work on three initiatives related to community recovery. These projects reflect DEMA's and the University of Delaware's ongoing efforts to develop timely resources for Delaware's communities to recover from the varied impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and a move to expand upon the University's and DEMA's capacity for direct coordination.

Recover Delaware

The [Institute of Public Administration \(IPA\)](#) has received funding from DEMA to support the University's [Recover Delaware program](#), which has focused on identifying community recovery needs and on developing timely resources and ongoing educational opportunities. In support of this initiative, IPA launched a [new Recover Delaware Roundtable series](#) on June 9, hosted by Troy Mix, IPA Associate Director. This roundtable series will provide updates on Delaware's economic recovery, as well as discuss local priorities and opportunities for shaping and accelerating economic recovery across Delaware and its communities. The series also serves as a method to engage community leaders directly in conversations related to recovery resources, explore policy implications and provide ongoing educational opportunities. The next *Recover Delaware Roundtable* is Thursday, September 30, 2021, from 12:00pm to 1:30pm. To register click here: [Recover Delaware Roundtable](#).

Troy Mix says, “The aim of this Round Table series and Recover Delaware is to incite conversations about future uncertainties, including scenarios that might impact your community, your government or your organization. We intend to work together with the greater community to share resources, understand local recovery needs, and develop the ability together as a statewide community to plan for and make investments in community resilience. We can then support implementation by providing a place where the University can assist with recovery planning, support going after grant funds, and developing policies and programs that are going to improve resiliency to those future shocks that might come down the pike.”

The series also complements ongoing work to develop a practical guidebook for community and economic resilience in Delaware, developed by IPA fellows Morgan Cohen and Collin Willard. This product is part of a long-term Recover Delaware initiative to synthesize data collected through Delaware local and State representatives, emergency management professionals, and Delaware community members. The guidebook will support future recovery initiatives by providing a centralized location for resources, best practices, and tools, as well as deeper-level analyses of recovery topics covered through the *Round Table* series.

The first Recover Delaware takeover edition of the *DEMA Community Support and Recovery Task Force Newsletter* was released as of June 10, as a part of an ongoing supplementary *Recover Delaware Spotlight*, which will be a monthly round-up of analysis, resources, and action opportunities for recovery and resilience planning in Delaware.

Older Adults and Emergency Preparedness

[Delaware Sea Grant](#) has also received support for its [recovery](#)

[and resilience planning initiatives](#). Through this partnership, Delaware Sea Grant and DEMA, with the support of IPA, are working on community planning guidance and outreach strategies that are tailored specifically to the State's needs. As adults over 65 years old comprise one of the fastest-growing demographics in Sussex County, this group is a large focus for the county and State's ongoing resilience planning efforts.

A major product of this partnership is an online "hub," developed as a one-stop resource for aiding outreach, emergency planning, recovery, and resilience. Danielle Swallow, Coastal Hazards Specialist for the Delaware Sea Grant, says "we've got fast growing demographic in older adults, and they're disproportionately impacted, as we saw during the pandemic, and that sets the context for what is the need... because there's gaps out there in planning for this population. So we're creating this hub which is a platform that's going to be a one stop resource by consolidating the information into one place. The purpose is to aid planning, and that's outreach as emergency response recovery, all of it, hopefully to help improve overall resilience".

Julia O'Hanlon, IPA Policy Scientist and Nicole Minni, IPA Associate Policy Scientist, are also enhancing and expanding a prototype GIS mapping tool designed to help emergency managers and local officials better plan for the needs of older adults before, during, and after emergencies. Danielle Swallow, Julia O'Hanlon and Nicole Minni have a long history of working together on emergency response efforts for older adults and Sussex County, and view this as a long-term opportunity to expand upon their ongoing efforts to support emergency planning and the development of recovery tools for this population.

DRC It!: COVID-19 and Risk Communication

DEMA is also partnering with the [Disaster Research Center \(DRC\)](#) to work on the latest round of [DRC It!](#), an educational initiative that works to make academic research more accessible to emergency management practitioners. Through this partnership, DRC researchers will work to consolidate peer-reviewed studies and literature about risk communication as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic into four products:

1. Topic Summary: A 2-5 page overview of the whole topic
2. Theme Summary: A 6-10 page detailed overview of each theme and specific findings from the literature
3. Animated Video: A 5-7 minute video providing a narrative of the findings
4. Bibliography: A list of 40-80 sources used to inform the project

These four products will be used by DEMA, along with other agencies to educate stakeholders about risk communication during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to inform future programs and policies. This resource, which will contain scientifically informed guidance for practitioners, will be made accessible on the University of Delaware website.

This work will be overseen by DRC Directors James Kendra and Tricia Wachtendorf, as well as Joseph Trainor, Core Faculty at the DRC. This project will also be supported by Rachel Slotter, a Disaster Science and Management Doctoral Student.

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